

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 DRC-01 /131 W

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R 020911Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5590

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 4801

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MY, TH

SUBJECT: RAZAK ON THAI SITUATION

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER RAZAK IS UNEASY ABOUT STUDENT OVERTHROW OF THANOM GOVERNMENT AND OVER ENTRY OF THAI KING INTO DOMESTIC POLITICS. HE FEARS STUDENTS MAY SEEK OVERTHROW OF SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENTS NOT RUN TO THEIR LIKING AND THAT KING WILL FIND ROLE OF MEDIATOR BETWEEN STUDENTS AND GOVERNMENT UNCOMFORTABLE. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING MY CALL ON PRIME MINISTER NOV 1, RAZAK EXPRESSED UNEASINESS ABOUT RECENT EVENTS IN THAILAND. HE SAID THAT WHILE IT WAS CLEARLY DESIRABLE TO HAVE A RE-INTRODUCTION OF DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES IN THAILAND, IT WAS A RISKY SITUATION INDEED IF THE MANIPULATION OF GOVERNMENT POLICY WERE TO BE HANDED OVER TO STUDENTS. THE TROUBLE WITH A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT ACTION SUCH AS OCCURRED IN BANGKOK IS THAT IT MIGHT BE REPEATED WHENEVER STUDENT LEADERS FELT THE COUNTRY WAS NOT BEING RUN TO THEIR LIKING.

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WM RAZAK ALSO EXPRESSED UNEASINESS ABOUT THE INTERVENTION BY THE THAI KING. HAVING INTERVENED DIRECTLY IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS, THE KING MUST ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS ACTIONS. THIS WILL MAKE THE KING AND ROYAL FAMILY FAR MORE VULNERABLE THAN IN THE PAST. RAZAK ADDED THAT HE HAD A HIGH PERSONAL REGARD FOR THE KING AS AN INTELLIGENT AND STRAIGHTFORWARD PERSON WHO COULD BE RELIED ON TO MAKE PROPER DECISIONS. UNFORTUNATELY HE MAY NOW BE PLACED IN THE UNCOMFORTABLE ROLE OF MEDIATOR BETWEEN STUDENTS AND A CIVILAIAN GOVERNMENT, A ROLE WHICH COULD PROVE TO EXTREMELY UNCOMFORTABLE.

3. RAZAK THOHUGHT THAT ACTIONS BEING TAKEN AGAINST PRIME MINISTER THANOM IN CONFISCATING HIS PRIVATE PROPERTIES, ETC., WERE UNFORTUNATE AND EXCESSIVE. RAZAK EXPRESSED A HIGH OPINION OF THANOM, WHOM HE THOUGHT HAD BEEN A SINCERE AND, IRONICALLY IN RECENT YEARS, A SOMEWHAT RELUCTANT LEADER OF HIS COUNTRY.

4. RAZAK SAID HE HOPED THAT AS TIME GOES ON THE THAI SITUATION WOULD FIRM UP. AT PERESENT HE FELT THAT A NEW ELEMENT OF INSTABILITY HAD BEEN INTRODUCED INTO THE REGION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973KUALA04801
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: KUALA LUMPUR
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731159/aaaabrdy.tel
Line Count: 83
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21-Nov-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <26-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RAZAK ON THAI SITUATION SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER RAZAK IS UNEASY ABOUT STUDENT
TAGS: PFOR, MY, TH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005